

Emerson Legislative Update February 2002

SENATE CONFIRMS GOVERNOR'S CABINET APPOINTMENTS

The Senate has unanimously confirmed Governor Granholm's newest cabinet appointments. Lt. Col. Tadarial Sturdivant will head the Michigan Dept. of State Police. Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler will oversee the Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs. William Overton will be the director of the Dept. of Corrections. William Anderson will be reappointed as director of the Dept. of History, Arts, and Libraries.

BIPARTISAN LAND USE COUNCIL FORMED

The Governor and legislative leaders recently announced the formation of a bipartisan Michigan Land Use Leadership Council. This council will be co-chaired by former Governor William Milliken and former Attorney General Frank J. Kelley. The council will study and identify trends, causes, and consequences of urban sprawl, and will provide recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature designed to minimize the impact of current land use trends on Michigan's environment and economy. Public participation will be sought and encouraged.

MANDATORY DROP-OUT AGE BILL INTRODUCED

A bill to increase the compulsory education age from 16 to 18 was recently introduced in the Senate. It would also set up alternative education possibilities for students who are unable to stay in traditional schools. Senate Bill 24 would allow a student to use approved alternative education programs, vocational education programs, community college coursework, or cooperative educational programs between a community college and an intermediate school district to complete the requirements for a high school diploma.

FREE HEALTH SCREENING FOR SENIORS

The Genesee County Health Department has received a grant from the Valley Area Agency on Aging (VAAA) to provide health screening exams to Genesee County residents age 60 years and older. The screening can include: breast exams, Pap smears, random cholesterol, blood glucose testing and vaccines if needed. Screening is free and will take place at the Burton branch of the Genesee County Health Dept., G3373 S. Saginaw St., Burton. To make an appointment, please call (810) 237-4570 and ask for Senior Adult Screening. Availability is limited, so please call soon.

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SENATE COSPONSORS SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE BILL

The Senate introduced a bill to create a blue ribbon committee on special education. The new committee will make policy and funding recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. First on the committee's agenda will be tackling the funding crisis resulting from mandated school programs. Committee members will also include parents, teachers, school board members, and special education professionals.

The council will seek public participation in the process by turning to stakeholders such as developers, builders, contractors, environmentalists, historic preservationists, citizen groups, and local government agencies.